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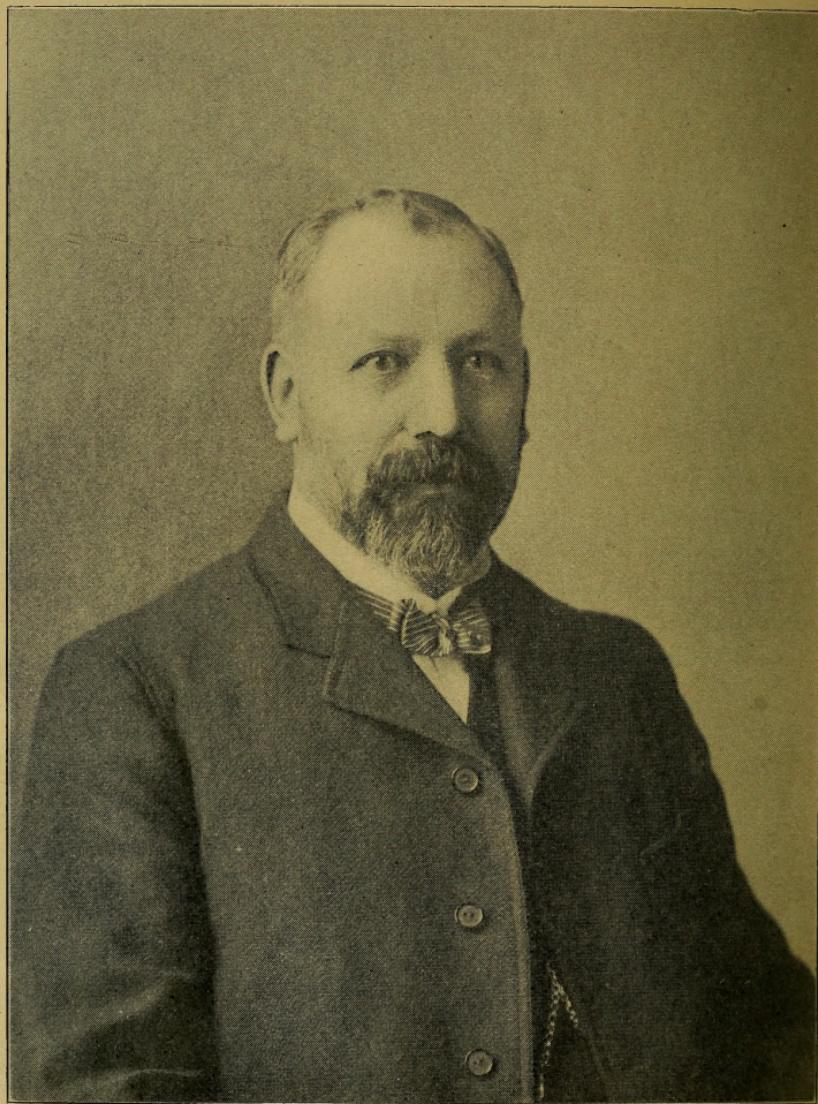
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How to Make Money

GROWING

VIOLETS



George Saltford



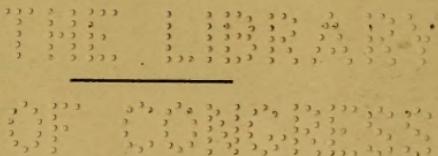
Yours truly
Geo Salsford

How to Make Money Growing Violets

BY

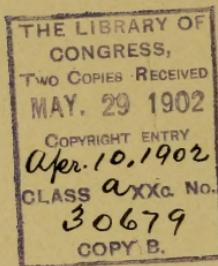
GEORGE SALTFORD

VIOLET SPECIALIST



NEW YORK
THE VIOLET CULTURE CO.
No. 61 Quincy Street, Brooklyn Borough, N. Y.
1882

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PREFACE.

A page digested is better than a volume hurriedly read.—MACAULEY.

The love of the beautiful in nature and in art is inherent in the breast of nearly every human soul, and the cultivation of flowers has been held from time immemorial to be one of the most elevating and ennobling of pursuits.

He that loves and studies the laws of nature and follows her teachings will be successful in growing flowers and will also ennable himself, build up his moral character and make of himself an honorable and useful member of the community in which he lives.

Labor and meditation are not incompatible; work should never be so hard as to be irksome, but only a pleasure, and thus prosecuted it will not alone give the best results, but will at the same time afford an education, by giving opportunity to delve into the operations of Nature and Nature's laws.

Now, as the great majority of the human race must of necessity work for money, the subject of how to make money and make it pleasantly and honestly becomes at once an interesting one. In fact, it has been the theme of the wisest men in all ages. As man becomes more and more civilized the need of money becomes more imperative and thousands are to-day asking the ques-

tion: How may I add to my income legitimately and without physical discomfort?

How many thousands of widows with growing children in towns, villages or on farms are struggling to make both ends meet, yet despairing of ever doing so as they watch their small savings dwindle away? How many men with small gardens in town, village or country side are idle through the long winter months, willing and able enough to work yet without employment?

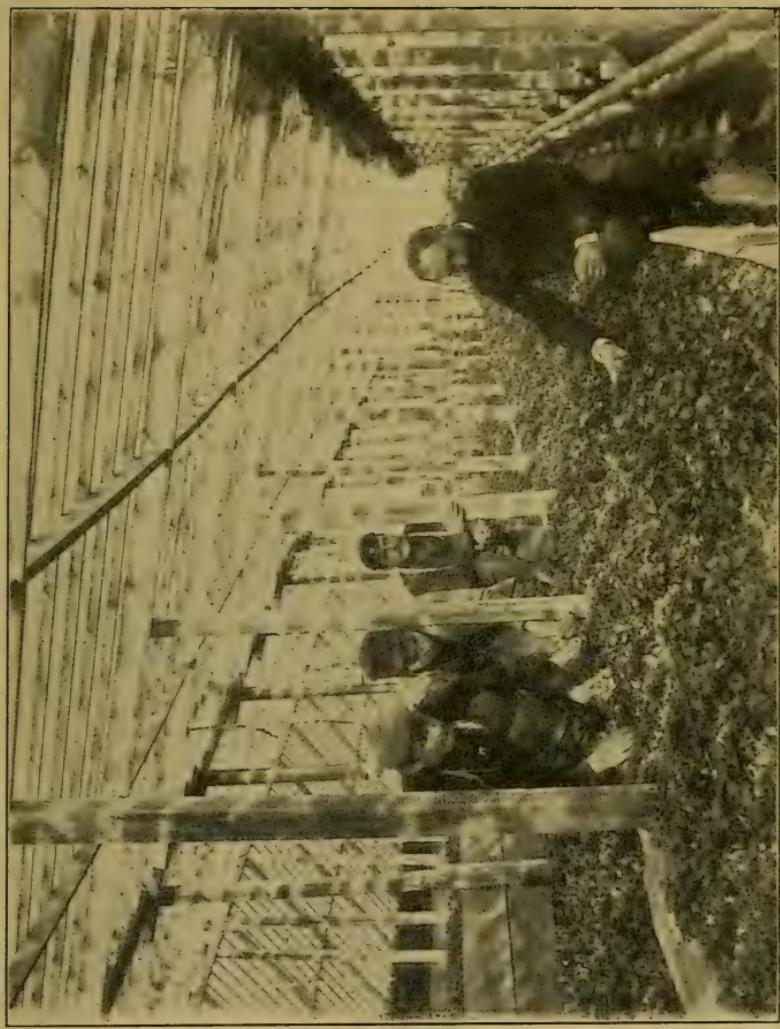
To such as these this little book is dedicated, with the perfect knowledge and consciousness that if the reader of How to make money growing violets will follow the instructions laid down in the following pages, they will be successful in adding largely to their incomes and in increasing their happiness by cultivating those "darlings of the April rains"—violets.

At the theatre, the opera, the concert, the ball and in the home of the fashionable world, the violet reigns supreme. The fact that it is scarce makes it all the more in demand.

While this book will undoubtedly be of service to the professional grower, its main object is to prove to those struggling for an honest livelihood that big financial returns are sure to be gained in a pleasant way by those who study its pages.

GEORGE SALT FORD.

New York, May 1, 1902.



PICKING VIOLETS.

INTRODUCTION.

It will surprise many people, not professional flower growers, to learn that the sweet violet (*Viola odorata*) is not found native in this country. According to the best authorities, it is widely distributed over the European continent and Asia, and was first cultivated for its value medicinally. Later on its refreshing fragrance and its beauty of form attracted the lovers of the beautiful in nature, with the result that its culture has grown widely.



INTERIOR VIOLET HOUSE.

How to Make Money Growing Violets

CHAPTER I.

SOILS.

As nearly everything in Nature must of necessity come from the soil, it stands to reason that the soil for growing violets is of prime importance.

While violets will grow in almost any soil, from sand to clay, they will not attain the highest development unless the soil is fitted to their needs. In fact, there must be sufficient food of the right kind within the reach of all the plants at all times. Then, if the plant can assimilate, or, as it were, digest the food, the results, other things being equal, will be handsome, high colored, large and fragrant flowers, and these flowers will command a high price in all the cities where they are offered for sale.

We have found by experience that the very best soil is what is termed a medium sod loam, such as an old sheep pasture or meadow, where the grass grows strong, what a farmer would call good corn ground, where corn or potatoes would grow well if heavily manured.

This kind of soil will grow first class violets.

What the grower of moderate means wants is to produce flowers at the lowest possible cost, and as the soil is one of the most expensive items in the cultivation of

the violet, we shall endeavor to describe the easiest, cheapest and best manner of preparing the soil for the reception of the young plants.

Just as to quantity required, measure your house or frame as the case may be (inside). For every square foot of surface you will need two square feet of sod outside. That is, suppose your house is 100 feet long by 18 feet wide, you will require twice 1,800 square feet, or 3,600 square feet of sod or thereabout.

Now mark off a piece of sod land this size, cover it with good rotted horse or cow manure two inches thick, then plow the whole up about four to five inches deep. After the surface has dried off, run a spring tooth harrow over it several times, let it lay a week, then plow it up again and repeat the operation several times. If the sod can be plowed in the fall so much the better, but if delayed until spring, then two or three weeks after plowing it will be ready for carting into the house or frame. If the would-be grower has not the advantage of owning his own land, then he may buy it by the wagon load and mix it in his own yard. This will require more work, perhaps, but if he mixes the manure into the soil as it is thrown from the wagon it will be equivalent to one turning. Mix one load of manure to every four loads of soil, then after the heap is complete, turn it over again; then it will be ready to put into the bed.

Before putting the soil into the bed, sprinkle the bottom of the bed with some air-slacked lime and a sprinkling of wood ashes, to be applied as the bed is filled. When filled, rake off the surface nice and even and begin planting.



HOUSE HEATED BY FLUE.

CHAPTER II.

PLANTING.

Secure strong thrifty plants from a reliable grower that are well rooted and with only one crown or heart. These are called sand struck cuttings. They take up very little room when packed and can be sent by express long distances.

When received, take them out and dip their roots in water and heel them in by covering the roots with damp soil. Then mark off your beds at equal distances, 9 inches one way and 7 inches the other. Some growers prefer to plant at distances of 9 or 10 inches.

Use an ordinary planting trowel, and see that the roots of the plants are straight in the hole made by the trowel, not doubled up, as we have seen some planted. Let the earth fall back against the roots, level, and give a gentle pressure to the soil around the plants. A little practice will soon make you proficient in this. A man with a boy to drop the plants, ought to be able to plant 2,000 in a day. When planted, water thoroughly.

CHAPTER III.

WATERING.

Watering is one of the most important things pertaining to the cultivation of the violet. Too much water will do as much harm to a plant as not enough, although it is a plant that requires plenty of water, especially when first planted. At the beginning the plant should be well watered by going over it a dozen or more times

with the hose, because if you should stand in one place long, you would have the bed overflowing with water, and you are apt to pack the soil. In syringing you should be very particular in keeping the leaves of the plants as free from soil as you possibly can. After the plants have been set out and well watered you should water once in the morning and at night for two or three weeks, but of course on cloudy and rainy days you would not need so much water. On very hot days it is a very good plan to dampen the house down in the middle of the day with a mist from the hose, which will lower the temperature. After the plants have started to grow, then once a day will be enough to water, either in the morning or evening. We prefer the morning, and when the days begin to shorten and you begin to pick your violets you should be very careful about watering, so as not to get the flowers dirty. The best time to water them is after you have picked your flowers and when you do water during this time of the fall you should soak the bed so as not to have to syringe so often during the winter months. If the hearts of the plants are to be kept dry through fear of rot, then water between the rows with the nozzle of the hose removed. Once a month should be enough to water, but it is according to the porosity of the soil you have; a heavy soil would hold the moisture longer than a light soil, so that the former would not require so much water as the latter. The pressure of the water has a great deal to do with growing the plants. With a good pressure, say 40 pounds to a square inch, you can keep down insects, where with a low pressure you would not be so successful. Growers living near towns that have water works



VIOLET PICKERS—NOON HOUR.

have the advantage over those living in the country. Although some of the best violets sent to market have been grown where wind-mills were used. Tanks are advertised in the country papers, and the advertiser will always be glad to furnish all necessary information on the subject. Every 27 39-100 inch in height will give you one pound pressure. Therefore, to have ten pounds pressure the tank would have to be elevated nearly 23 feet. If this method is not within the reach of the grower, a hand force pump will answer the purpose very well. The main point to be aimed at is to keep the plant growing in a healthy condition, and the grower must use his best judgment as the crop matures.

CHAPTER IV.

CULTIVATION.

After the plants have started to grow, which may be seen in about ten days from time of planting, they should be harrowed or cultivated with a small hand tool called a "five finger." This is simply five pieces of stout wire bent at the ends about two inches, the other ends fastened to a small wooden handle, and made, when finished, to represent a straight toothed harrow in miniature. This we consider the most important tool and should be used to cultivate between the plants every week or oftener. The principle is to keep the soil sweet and loose to allow air and moisture to penetrate the soil, in fact, cultivate them a little better than you would

a first class bed of young strawberry plants, and remove the runners as soon as they become two or three inches long and keep the plant down to one or two crowns.

CHAPTER V.

VARIETIES.

Although there are more than 200 varieties of violets, very few have been largely grown during late years. The California single was ushered in with a great blaze of trumpets a few years ago, and flowers of this variety were frozen in solid cakes of ice and sent from headquarters in California to one of the leading florists in New York City to be exhibited as a wonder.

It did not meet with great success. "The Princess of Wales" is the best single violet in cultivation to-day. Tens of thousands of these are now grown.

The "Lady Hume Campbell" (double) has been and still is admired by many, but it is pale in color, although a stronger grower than "Marie Louise."

"Swanly White" is the best double white and requires a rather high temperature. The demand for it is limited. The old "Neapolitan" which was grown almost exclusively in the seventies, is discarded and "Marie Louise," the best double blue, has taken its place. This queen of violets holds her own still in the front rank of the violet family, fearing no rival and apparently conscious of the fact that clothed in her royal robe of purple all visitors will pay homage to her.



WINDMILL FOR PUMPING WATER.

CHAPTER VI.

TEMPERATURE.

Much of the success to be obtained in growing violets will depend upon the temperature of the atmosphere.

When the outside temperature will allow it, keep the house at 40 degrees to 45 degrees at night, and in the daytime 5 degrees to 10 degrees higher, with plenty of ventilation.

This you can regulate by light or heavy firing. Like all plant life, the violet delights in a fresh, pure and sweet atmosphere, and if this is given it at all times with the above temperature, the result will be fine flowers.

CHAPTER VII.

HEATING.

There are three methods of heating green-houses, namely, by flue, hot water and steam. In time, no doubt electricity will also be used.

The flue is the simplest and cheapest of all the known methods of heating. It is simply an arch of brick, forming a kind of oven with iron doors in front, and leading from the arch are laid 10-inch or 12-inch drain cement tile through one side of the house, turned from the outside of the house into the chimney.

This form of flue has been used in the beginning of the business life of some of our most successful growers.

Hot water circulating through iron pipes is perhaps, all things considered, the most desirable. Any good

plumber can estimate and lay out the pipes in the most improved way. There are a number of good boilers in the market which can be bought for a reasonable sum.

Steam heating is suitable for large establishments where a night foreman is kept and is therefore too expensive for the beginner.

CHAPTER VIII.

FERTILIZER.

Many experiments have been made with both natural and artificial fertilizers, and experience has proved there is nothing better than well rotted barnyard manure. Hen manure and the different forms of sulphates and nitrates are only good in the hands of the expert, and ought to be left entirely alone by the beginner.

In all operations in violet growing, as with all other forms of plant growing, common sense should rule the grower at every turn. Reason, plan and think for yourself after you have been fairly started and you will not fail to succeed in growing these beautiful and fragrant flowers.

CHAPTER IX.

INSECTS.

"The true way to treat a difficulty is to face it boldly, and cut through or remove it."

To enter into a detailed and scientific account of insects injurious to violets would be beyond the scope of



EXTERIOR VIOLET HOUSE.

this little book. A volume could be written on the subject. Only those of prime importance will therefore be noticed.

Green and Black Aphis or "Fly," Red Spider and Gall Fly.

Red Spider grows and thrives in a dry, warm atmosphere, and can be seen through a small magnifying glass as well as by the naked eye, on the under side of the leaf, and resemble somewhat grains of red pepper.

Thousands may be seen when the plant is badly infested. Water applied with force through the nozzle of the hose is the best remedy, together with a moist atmosphere.

Green and Black Fly, or Aphis, as their name indicates, are small insects that sap the tissue of the leaves and stem of the plant. They also infest the bloom or the flowers.

Tobacco smoke is the most popular means used to destroy these insects. The damp stems of tobacco leaves are placed in an iron pot and burned in the house, care being taken not to let the tobacco blaze up. When the house is full of smoke, put out the fire and keep the house closed. Repeat the process every two or three weeks or oftener if necessary.

There is another way of killing them, and incidently the grower, namely, by the use of cyanide of potash dissolved in sulphuric acid. This combination generates hydrocyanic acid gas, but as this is an agent so deadly and dangerous in the hands of a beginner, we shall not attempt to describe the way to use it.

The Gall Fly is a small fly that deposits its eggs in the heart of the plant during the months of August

and September. These eggs hatch in a few days, and the maggot resulting robs the young leaves and produces a decayed heart of the plant.

The only known remedy for these pests is hand picking and the use of hydrocyanic acid gas.

CHAPTER X.

SPOT DISEASES OR SPOT.

This is the only disease we shall have anything to say about, because it is, we believe, the worse. It is produced by a fungi depositing its spores on the leaves of the plant, and if the atmosphere is damp and the plant in proper condition, small white spots will be produced over the leaves by the destruction of tissue.

This decomposition produces a very nauseating and disagreeable odor, that if once detected, will always be recognized afterwards.

The proper way to combat this disease is by keeping the plants in such a healthy condition that they will be able to resist the attack.

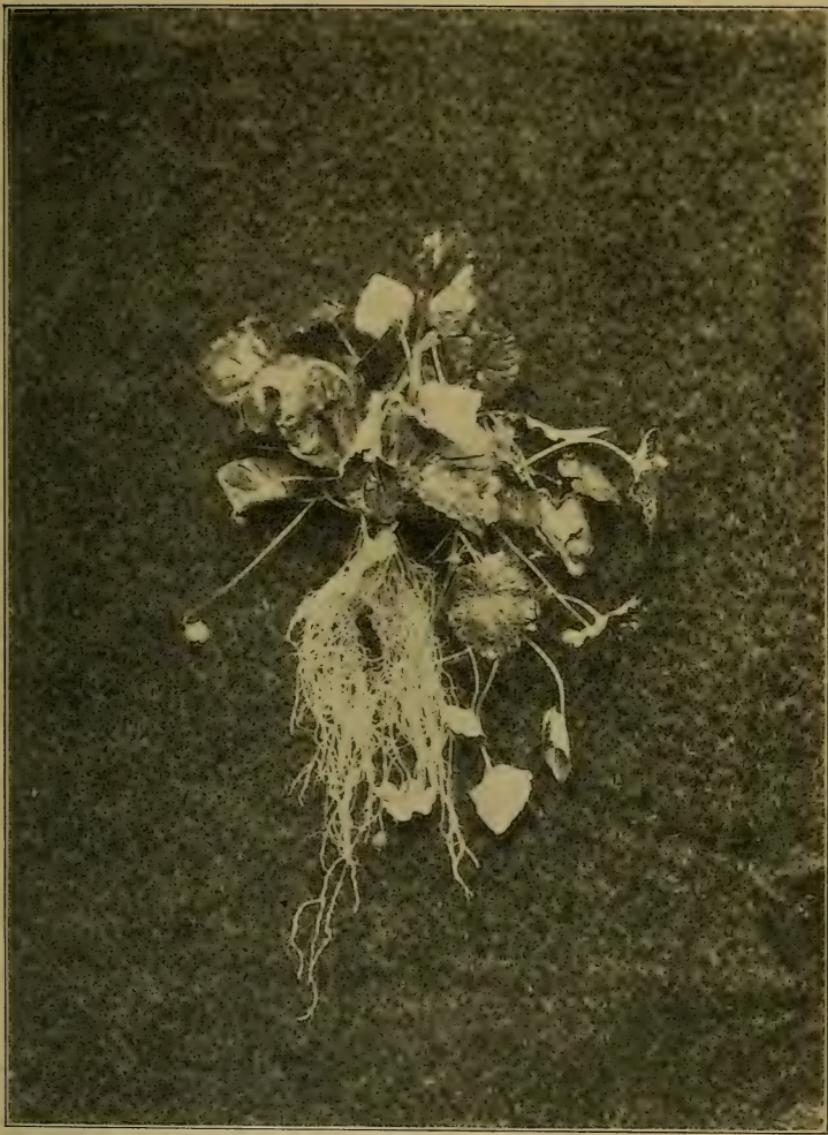
Should the plants, however, become affected, "the spot" should be picked out by hand and burned.

It is the same with vegetable life as with human life, the more hygienic the surroundings are the better chance an individual has to resist disease.

As it is absolutely necessary, if the human being would fight off cholera or yellow fever, that he attend strictly to proper hygienic laws, so must the violet grower if he would protect his plants from "spot" and other diseases, pay the strictest attention to keeping them clean and in a healthy condition.



GOOD PLANT.



POOR PLANT.

CHAPTER XI.

HOUSES.

The best size of house for growing is one 20 feet wide and one or more hundred feet long, with side walls of double boarding, 3 feet high. Posts are set in the ground every six feet apart. On these are nailed pine or hemlock boards. Rafters are run up to the centre piece from this, and sash laid on and screwed down.

Even span houses are preferred to any other form.

Any good carpenter can build these. Always use double thick glass, as hail is very apt to break the single thick, and there is always more breakage in the latter than in the former.

CHAPTER XII.

COLD FRAMES.

These structures are simply boards of pine nailed to posts, similar to a large box with no cover, only longer, higher on one side than the other, and 6 feet across. This is covered with glazed sash, 3 feet by 6 feet in winter and cold weather.

These sashes are covered with any coarse material, such as salt, hay, straw or straw made into mats, and taken off when the sun shines on the frames.

These are the simplest structures and cost very little money to build. Any ordinary handy man can build the frames and the sash can be procured from any sash and blind manufacturer at market rates.

CHAPTER XIII.

PICKING AND MARKETING.

The market demands to-day violets with long strong stems; color, a rich, deep purple, with full bloom; petals, large and heavy, very small white centre; fragrance, penetrating; foliage, large, deep green.

One or two hundred of such violets in a bunch make a superb corsage bouquet, although fifty to the bunch is the popular number. With regard to selling, the days for making contracts for entire crops are past, and perhaps it is as well, for the contracts are seldom carried out, owing to the quality getting below the standard, or the market going against one of the parties concerned.

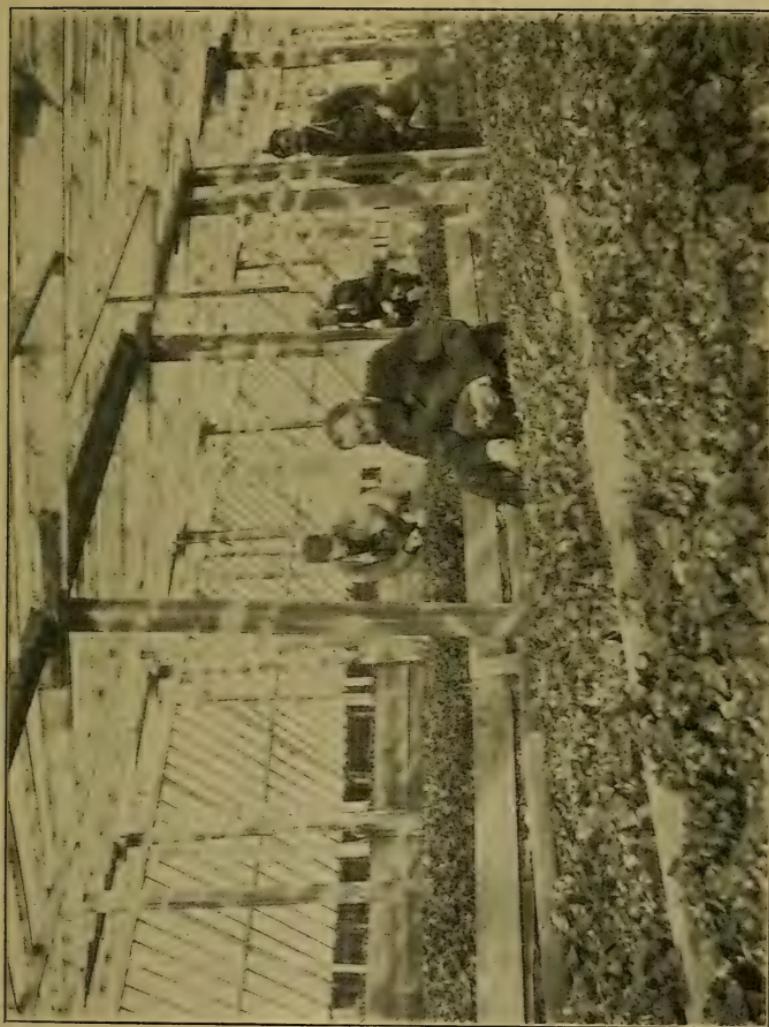
The commission merchant has come to stay, and the violet grower cannot succeed without him.

Violets are shipped in boxes lined with wax tissue paper, packed snugly together, one layer to the box.

We were visited by a celebrated grower some years ago and asked what we did with the violets when bunched. Said he: "I first throw mine in a cistern and let them stay overnight in the water. They are nice and stiff when I take them out in the morning."

That we should consider suicidal in these days, as water destroys the bloom as well as the perfume. We now use zinc pans, five inches deep, two feet wide and four or five feet long, filled with water. A frame of wire netting, three inch mesh, is placed over the pans and the bunched violets, fringed with their own leaves, are placed in the holes to await the packer.

VIOLET PICKERS.



The pans should be placed in a cool, damp room, free from all odors, as the violet is very susceptible and will take up foreign odor readily.

Therefore smoking pipes or cigars ought never to be indulged in by packers or pickers during business hours.

Kerosene oil and soap should be especially avoided. In cold weather line the boxes with several thicknesses of newspaper or plain paper.

Place your violets in snugly, so that they will not slip about when the box is handled. Fasten the cover with an ordinary iron clasp, after placing the invoice inside, tack the address on the cover and ship by the nearest and best express company, after making arrangements with a reliable commission merchant in flowers. Such merchants can be found in all large cities.

CHAPTER XIV.

BUNCHING.

Any one looking over a lot of boxes of violets received by a dealer in any of our large cities will notice at once the difference in the bunching of the violets received from various shippers. Some will be bunched in an even, smooth and symmetrical way, with their fringe of leaves as true as any line made by a compass; another grower with just as good flowers, the bunches of which will be so uneven that they look like the ridges and peaks of the Rocky Mountains in miniature, in-

stead of the level plain below them. Another will have his flowers tied so tight that it would be difficult to press a hat pin through them and looking like a boutonniere instead of a loose, symmetrical bunch, six inches in diameter. The consequence is that the well-bunched violets are sold first and at better prices than the others. Thus it will be seen that it is of the utmost importance to bunch your violets well before sending them to market and tied with very small blue or purple cotton cord, and the quicker they reach the buyer the better it will be for all concerned on account of having them arrive in a fresh and fragrant condition. A violet having no sweetness is not wanted at any price.

CHAPTER XV.

SHIPPING BOXES.

A shipping box in general use to hold 1,000 violets should be about 20 inches long, 6 inches deep, 13 inches wide, of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wood; metal clasps are used to bind the corners to prevent breakage. A strap of leather attached to the lid or top makes a useful handle.

An ideal box to hold 1,500 violets should be 6 inches deep, 2 feet 8 inches long, and 14 inches wide, inside measure; wood, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick for sides, top and bottom; the ends $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick wood should be used, same handle and clasps as for smaller box.



VIOLET HOUSES.

CHAPTER XVI.

AVERAGE OF BLOOMS TO A PLANT.

We are often asked how many blooms a good healthy plant ought to produce? An average of fifty blooms to the plant is considered very good.

Fourteen years ago the writer had a small house holding 800 plants that yielded 85,000 good blooms in three months, February, March and April. These were grown in a rich muck soil.

The violet is loved more for its perfume than for anything else, and we would urge growers to use every means in their power to increase that perfume.

If they do that we may rest assured that this popular and modest little flower will be sought after and loved more and more by the people at large as the years go by.

CHAPTER XVII.

PROFITS.

Commercially speaking the question will immediately be asked: "Will it pay, and how much will it pay?"

This is the acme of all the grower's hopes and plans, his pleasures and his aim.

We answer most emphatically, yes. Here are a few instances of actual facts. Many more could be furnished but the following will be sufficient.

From a small house, 60 feet long by 16 feet wide, holding about 1,000 plants of "Marie Louise" variety, 90,000 blooms were picked, which netted the industrious grower \$500.

Another case. Two small houses, 100 feet long by 20 feet wide, each holding together 4,000 plants, netted the grower \$2,500.

Another grower, a man who had no particular knowledge of the business, using his common sense and a little capital he had saved from his weekly wages, built a small house, 80 feet long by 20 feet wide, the result of which was \$1,000, the first year to his credit.

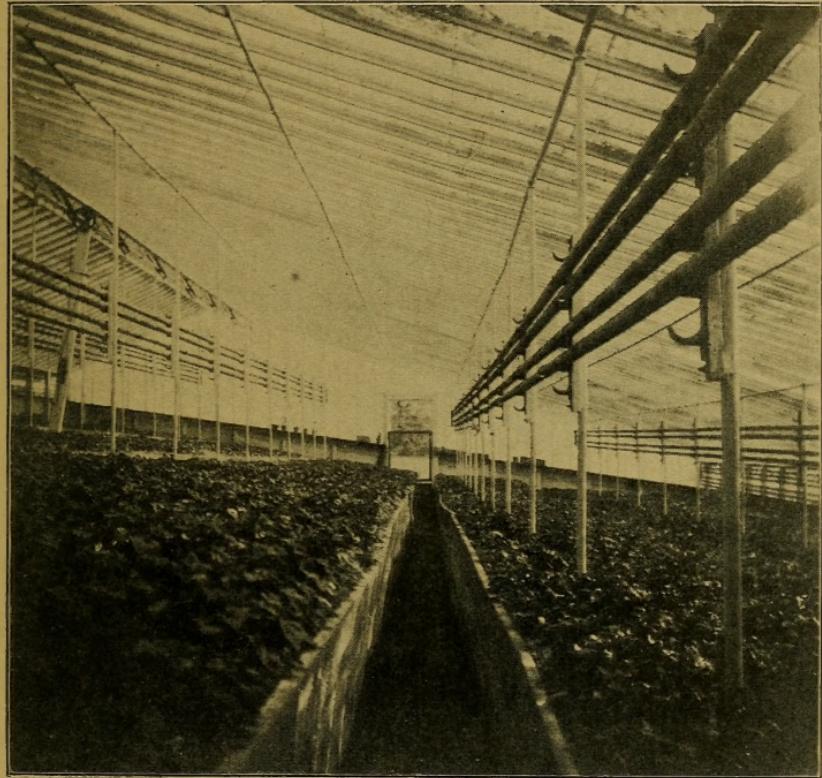
The author could cite case after case where the foreclosure of a mortgage on property was imminent, where by building a small green-house and growing violets, his property was redeemed and his credit was again first class.

In fact, we know of no better way to make money on a small place than by growing violets, and the reader may rest assured that if he grows them good his flowers will be sought for by dealers from far and near, and he will be a prosperous citizen.

When you can grow 1,000 plants well you can grow 10,000 plants as easily and with much less expense.

Finally, all that is needed is good common sense, a small piece of land, a very small capital and a willingness to work faithfully at a very pleasant occupation.

"Oh! the flowers look upward in every place,
Through this beautiful world of ours,
And dear as a smile on an old man's face
Is the smile of the sweet blue flowers."



INTERIOR VIOLET HOUSE.

MAY 29 1908

JUN. 4 1902

MAY 29 1902

Violet Plants for Sale

Young plants, such as are recommended by this volume, may be purchased at the following prices:

\$20.00 per 1000

500 at 1,000 rates

\$3.00 per 100

No C. O. D. orders taken.

Cash must accompany all orders.

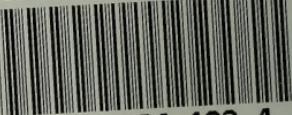
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